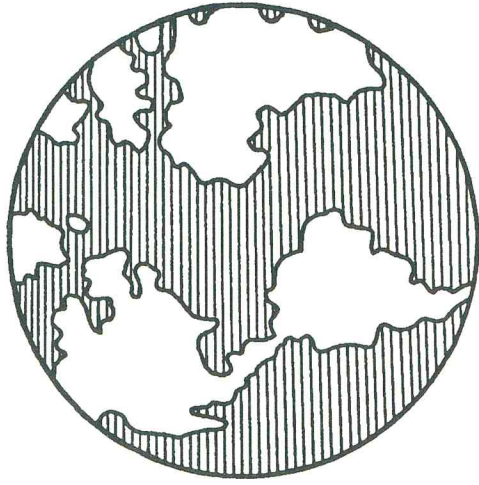


# NATIONAL



# HEROES



## FIGHTING FOAM

Name: Tanja Vogt

Age: 17 Grade: 12

Town: West Milford, New Jersey

School: West Milford High School

Goal: Get the school cafeteria to use paper instead of Styrofoam trays

### WHAT SHE DID

#### Summary

In 1988, Tanja had an assignment to write an essay about a local current event for her U.S. history class. While researching it, an article in the newspaper caught her eye: Apparently members of the West Milford School Board had voted to continue using Styrofoam trays in the cafeteria instead of paper ones. Why? Styrofoam trays were a nickel cheaper.

Tanja says, "I read that article real carefully. I asked myself, why would we use these things if they're harmful to the environment?"

She wrote her essay about the school board's







decision, then wrote a note to her teacher saying she thought students would pay extra for paper trays.

Her teacher got excited. "He said if we stood up for what we believed in, it could be like a quiet revolution," Tanja recalls. So the class started a "Stop Styro" campaign.

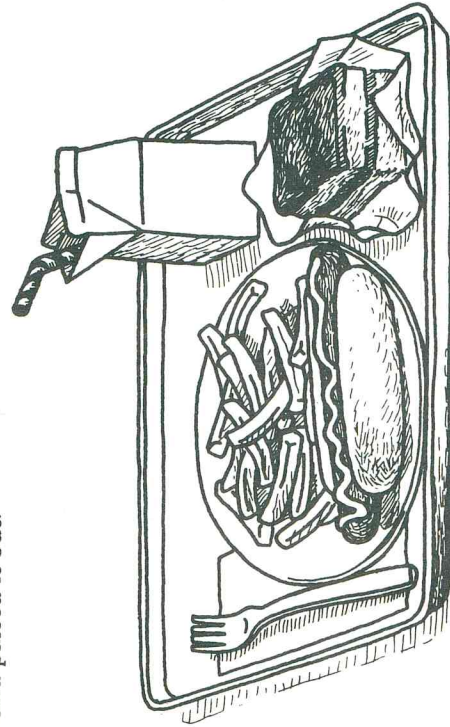
### Results

They convinced the school board to switch from Styrofoam to paper...and eventually to reusable trays.

But that's not all. They got plenty of publicity and inspired kids at schools all over the U.S. to start their own anti-Styrofoam campaigns. Many people believe the "revolution" they sparked was a key factor in one company's decision to switch from Styrofoam to paper packaging.

### HOW SHE DID IT

1. Tanja and her classmates researched the environmental problems caused by producing, using and throwing away Styrofoam.
2. They created a pamphlet with Styrofoam pros and cons and passed it out.



3. They polled the student body to see if people would pay an extra nickel for paper trays; 85% of students said they would.
4. They sent the poll results to the school board.
5. The board agreed to make both paper and Styrofoam trays available for a week—to see if kids would *really* choose paper.
6. Tanja remembers, "A lot of kids got so enthusiastic—they were giving out nickels so kids who forgot extra money could buy paper trays." By the end of the week, 86% of the students had paid the extra nickel.
7. When the school board heard the results, the members voted unanimously to use paper trays.

### Achievements

Tanja and other West Milford H.S. students went to the United Nations to participate in the Youth Environmental Forum. They shared their story with kids from all over the world.

### YOU CAN BE A HERO

*Help promote alternatives to Styrofoam. For more information:*

- You can write to Tanja at 70 Mountain Circle, West Milford, NJ 07480. Tell her what kind of information you want and include a self-addressed, stamped, 11" x 17" envelope with \$2.00 in postage on it.
- Local Solutions to Global Pollution, 2121 Bonar St., Berkeley, CA 94702. Ask for an order form that shows what information you can get. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope.